

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MANAMA 00816 040818Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----097538 040840Z /11

P R 040450Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6020
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
)AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 94
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

S E C R E T MANAMA 0816

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, US, XF, BA
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER ON BEGIN VISIT AND NEXT STEPS

REF: STATE 77949

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1. I BRIEFED FOREIGN MINISTER APRIL 3 ON BASIS REFTTEL,
STRESSING OUR COMMITMENT TO PRESS ON WITH EFFORT, FIRST, TO
ACHIEVE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION
FOR INFORMATION. HE SAID HE WAS PLEASED THAT PRESIDENT
CARTER HAD STOOD FIRM -- HE NOTED PRESIDENT'S CONGRESSIONAL
BRIEFING ON ARMS SALE PACKAGE DURING BEGIN VISIT -- BUT
WONDERED WHAT NEXT STEPS COULD BE. I SAID THAT IT SEEMED

THAT THE ISRAELI POLITICAL POT MUST BOIL FOR A TIME AND SUGGESTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT RECENT, LARGE RALLY IN TEL AVIV

AGAINST GOIPOLICIES WAS SIGN OF SOME MOVEMENT IN RIGHT DIRECTION. FONMIN AGREED BUT ADDED THAT HE DOUBTED ISRAELI POLITICS COULD CHANGE ENOUGH, SOON ENOUGH TO SAVE SADAT INITIATIVE.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER SEIZED ON THOUGHT (PARA THREE REFTTEL) THAT ISRAELI GOVERNMENT NOW FACES DECISIONS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED AND ASKED IF THIS IS NOT TRUE AS WELL OF USG. USG HAS VITAL INTERESTS WHICH IT NOW KNOWS ARE BEING INCREASINGLY FRUSTRATED BY A CLIENT STATE; SOMETHING HAS TO GIVE. CONTINUING, HE SAID HE HAD FEELING FROM HIS RECENT VISIT TO U.S. THAT MIDDLE EAST ARMS SALES PACKAGE MIGHT NOT PASS THE CONGRESS. IF THIS IS THE CASE THEN CONCLUSION WILL BE DRAWN IN ARAB WORLD THAT USG CANNOT REALLY HELP ITS ARAB FRIENDS OR ITSELF SUCCESSFULLY TO PURSUE THEIR MUTUAL INTERESTS IN M.E. PEACE AND STABILITY.

3. I REPLIED THAT SOME OF OPPOSITION TO M.E. ARMS SALES PACKAGE WAS ON GROUNDS UNRELATED TO ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT; THERE IS CONSIDERABLE FEELING AGAINST SALES IN GENERAL AND I ASKED WHAT HE FELT ARAB REACTION MIGHT BE TO NO AIRCRAFT SALES TO ANY MIDDLE EAST COUNTRY. FOREIGN MINISTER SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS WITH SAUDI FONMIN EN ROUTE TO CAIRO AL MEETING AND HE HAD STRONGEST IMPRESSION THAT SAG SEES AIRCRAFT SALE AS POLITICAL SYMBOL, AS TEST OF A RELATIONSHIP, AND WOULD BE
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DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED IF USG WERE TO FAIL THIS TEST.

4. IN THIS REGARD HE SAID HE HAD HEARD APRIL 2 THAT PRINCE SULTAN WOULD VISIT PARIS LATER THIS MONTH. FONMIN SAID HE WAS NOT AUTHORITATIVELY INFORMED BUT SUCH A VISIT SURELY WOULD BE POLITICAL SIGNAL TO USG -- AS WELL AS AN ECONOMIC ONE TO MAKERS OF MIRAGE AIRCRAFT.
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NNN

Message Attributes

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